Amendments to the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A focussing lens for focussing a charged particle beam onto a specimen at a predetermined landing angle, comprising:

at least a first electrode having a first aperture to generate a focussing electric field for focussing the charged particle beam onto the specimen; and

a correcting electrode having a curved surface to compensate for landing angle dependent distortions of the focussing electric field caused by the specimen.

2. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 1, ~~whereby~~ wherein the curved surface is cone-like shaped.

3. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 1, ~~whereby~~ wherein the curved surface of the correcting electrode has an opening on one side to provide space for the specimen to approach the first electrode.

4. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according~~ of claim 1, ~~whereby~~ wherein the curved surface of the correcting electrode is aligned to be rotationally symmetric with respect to a symmetry axis of the first aperture.

5. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 1, ~~whereby~~ wherein the curved surface of the correcting electrode encircles a symmetry axis by a covering angle of ~~at most~~ less than or equal to 350 degrees~~, preferably of at most 300 degrees, and even more preferred of at most 210 degrees~~.

6. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 1, ~~whereby~~ wherein the curved surface of the correcting electrode encircles a symmetry axis by a covering angle of at least 10 degrees~~, preferably of at least 60 degrees, and even more preferred of at least 180 degrees~~.

7. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 5, ~~whereby~~ wherein the covering angle is taken within the plane of the first aperture.

8. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 1, ~~whereby~~ wherein the curved surface of the correcting electrode is rigidly fastened to the at least first electrode.

9. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 1, ~~whereby~~ wherein the at least first electrode and the correcting electrode are electrically connected to different voltage sources to provide for different voltages.

10. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 1, ~~whereby~~ wherein the first electrode is cone-like shaped.

11. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 1, ~~whereby~~ wherein the curved surface of the correcting electrode faces the first electrode conformally.

12. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 1, ~~whereby~~ wherein a distance D1 between the at least one first electrode and the facing curved surface of the correcting electrode is smaller than 10 mm~~, preferably smaller than 4 mm and even more preferred smaller than 2 mm~~.

13. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 1, ~~whereby~~ wherein the at least one first electrode and the correcting electrode are arranged to withstand a voltage of at least 500 V~~, preferably of at least 2000V and even more preferred of at least 5000V between each other~~.

14. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 10, ~~whereby~~ wherein the curved surface of the correcting electrode is shaped and positioned to

cover more than 20%~~, preferably more than 40% and even more preferred more than 60%~~ of the cone-like shaped first electrode to electrostatically shield said cone-like shaped first electrode.

15. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 3, ~~whereby~~ wherein the opening of the curved surface of the correcting electrode is large enough to accommodate the specimen closer to the at least one first electrode than the distance D1 between the first electrode and the curved surface of the correcting electrode

16. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 3, ~~whereby~~ wherein a rim of the opening in the curved surface of the correcting electrode defines essentially a parabola.

17. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 1, ~~whereby~~ wherein the specimen is a planar ~~device, like a~~ semiconductor wafer ~~or a mask for photolithographic processes, preferably~~ having a diameter larger than 30 mm ~~and preferably larger than 100 mm~~.

18. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 2, ~~whereby~~ wherein a vertex angle of the cone-like shaped correcting electrode is ~~between~~ is within a range of 30 degrees and 160 degrees~~, preferably between 60 degrees and 120 degrees, and even more preferred between 85 degrees and 95 degrees~~.

19. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 1, further comprising a coil for providing a focussing magnetic field for focussing the charged particle beam.

20. (Currently Amended) The focussing lens ~~according to~~ of claim 1, further comprising a second electrode having a second aperture for focussing the charged particle beam.

21. (Currently Amended) A charged particle beam device to inspect or structure a specimen at various predetermined landing angles, comprising:

a charged particle beam source to generate a charged particle beam; and

a focussing lens to focus the charged particle beam onto the specimen, the focussing lens ~~comprises~~ comprising at least a first electrode having a first aperture to generate a focussing electric field for focussing the charged particle beam onto the specimen and a correcting electrode having a curved surface to compensate for landing angle dependent distortions of the focussing electric field caused by the specimen.

22. (Currently Amended) The charged particle beam device ~~according to~~ of claim 21, further comprising a tilting mechanism to tilt a symmetry axis of the focussing lens with respect to the surface of the specimen for inspecting or structuring the specimen between at least two different landing angles.

23. (Currently Amended) The charged particle beam device ~~according to~~ of claim 22, ~~whereby~~ wherein the tilting mechanism is capable of tilting the symmetry axis of the focussing lens to provide a vertical landing angle and a tilted landing angle which deviates from the vertical landing angle by at least 20 degrees ~~and preferably by at least 40 degrees~~.

24. (Currently Amended) The charged particle beam device ~~according to~~ of claim 22, ~~whereby~~ wherein the tilting mechanism is capable of providing a tilted landing angle which is half the cone vertex angle ~~of the cone~~ of the cone-like shaped first electrode.

25. (Currently Amended) The charged particle beam device ~~according to~~ of claim 22, ~~whereby~~ wherein the symmetry plane of the focussing lens ~~essentially equals~~ is equal to or about equal to the tilting plane.

26. (Currently Amended) A method [[of]] for inspecting or structuring a specimen by means of a charged particle beam at different landing angles, comprising ~~including the steps~~:

providing a charged particle beam device having a correcting electrode;

inspecting or structuring the specimen at a first landing angle at a first correcting electrode voltage applied to the correcting electrode; and

inspecting or structuring the specimen at a second landing angle at a second correcting electrode voltage applied to the correcting electrode.

27. (Currently Amended) A method [[of]] for inspecting or structuring a specimen by means of a charged particle beam at different landing angles, comprising ~~including the steps~~:

providing a charged particle beam device having a first electrode and a correcting electrode;

inspecting or structuring the specimen at a first landing angle with the correcting electrode at a first position with respect to the at least first electrode; and

inspecting or structuring the specimen at a second landing angle with the correcting electrode at a second position with respect to the at least first electrode.

28. (Currently Amended) The method ~~according to~~ of claim 27, ~~whereby~~ wherein the charged particle beam device is a charged particle beam device comprising a charged particle beam source to generate a charged particle beam and a focussing lens to focus the charged particle beam onto the specimen; the focussing lens ~~comprises~~ comprising at least a first electrode having a first aperture to generate a focussing electric field for focussing the charged particle beam onto the specimen and a correcting electrode having a curved surface to compensate for landing angle dependent distortions of the focussing electric field caused by the specimen.

29. (Currently Amended) The method ~~according to~~ of claim 27, ~~whereby~~ wherein the first landing angle is adjusted to be in ~~the~~ a range ~~between~~ within 70 degrees and 110 degrees~~, preferably between 80 degrees and 100 and even more~~

~~preferred between 85 degrees and 95 degrees~~ with respect to the surface of the specimen.

30. (Currently Amended) The method ~~according to~~ of claim 27, ~~whereby~~ wherein the second landing angle is adjusted to be in ~~the~~ a range ~~between~~ within 20 degrees and 70 degrees~~, preferably between 30 degrees and 60 and even more preferred between 40 degrees and 50 degrees~~ with respect to the surface of the specimen.

31. (Currently Amended) The method ~~according to~~ of claim 27, ~~whereby~~ wherein the first correcting electrode voltage is adjusted to be equal to the specimen voltage Vs applied to the specimen, or within ~~the~~ a range defined by the voltages between the specimen voltage Vs and the first electrode voltage V1 applied to the first electrode.

32. (Currently Amended) The method ~~according to~~ of claim 27, ~~whereby~~ wherein the second correcting electrode voltage is adjusted to be outside of ~~the~~ a range defined by the voltages between the specimen voltage Vs applied to the specimen and the first electrode voltage V1 applied to the first electrode.

33. (Currently Amended) The method ~~according to~~ of claim 32, ~~whereby~~ wherein the second correcting electrode voltage is adjusted to a voltage given by 2·Vs-V1 with a tolerance of less than 50 percent~~, preferably of less than 20 percent, and even more preferred of less than 10 percent~~.

34. (Currently Amended) The method ~~according to~~ of claim 27, ~~whereby~~ wherein the first ~~and/or~~ or second landing angles are adjusted by means of a tilting mechanism to tilt the symmetry axis of the focussing lens with respect to the surface of the specimen for inspecting or structuring the specimen between at least two different landing angles.

35. (Currently Amended) The method ~~according to~~ of claim 27, ~~whereby~~ wherein the distance between the second position and the first electrode is larger than the distance between the first position and the first electrode by a factor of at least two~~, preferably at least 10, and even more preferred by at least 100~~.

36. (Currently Amended) A focussing lens for focussing a charged particle beam onto a specimen at a predetermined landing angle, comprising:

at least a first electrode having a first aperture to generate a focussing electric field for focussing the charged particle beam onto the specimen; and

a correcting electrode having a cone-like shaped curved surface to compensate for landing angle dependent distortions of the focussing electric field caused by the specimen, ~~whereby~~ wherein the cone-like shaped curved surface of the correcting electrode has an opening on one side to provide space for the specimen to approach the first electrode.

37. (Currently Amended) A method [[of]] for inspecting or structuring a specimen by means of a charged particle beam at different landing angles, comprising ~~including the steps~~:

providing a charged particle beam device having a first electrode having a first electrode voltage V1, and a correcting electrode;

providing a specimen having a specimen voltage Vs;

inspecting or structuring the specimen at a first landing angle at a first correcting electrode voltage applied to the correcting electrode; and

inspecting or structuring the specimen at a second landing angle at a second correcting electrode voltage applied to the correcting electrode, ~~whereby~~ wherein the second correcting electrode voltage is adjusted to a voltage given by 2·Vs-V1 with a tolerance of less than 50 percent.

38. (Currently Amended) A method [[of]] for inspecting or structuring a specimen by means of a charged particle beam at different landing angles, comprising ~~including the steps~~:

providing a charged particle beam device ~~having~~ comprising a first electrode having a first electrode voltage V1, and a correcting electrode;

providing a specimen having a specimen voltage Vs;

inspecting or structuring the specimen at a first landing angle with the correcting electrode at a first position with respect to the at least first electrode; and

inspecting or structuring the specimen at a second landing angle with the correcting electrode at a second position with respect to the at least first electrode, ~~whereby~~ wherein the second correcting electrode voltage is adjusted to a voltage given by 2·Vs-V1 with a tolerance of less than 50 percent.